

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2, 2011



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Sutter's Fort Launches "Twilight: Return to the Fort" to Celebrate 35 Years of Popular School Program

Open to Community, Evening Event to Showcase Environmental Living Program

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – This summer, Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (SHP) has reason to celebrate. After 35 successful years of the Environmental Living Program (which provides California fourth graders an opportunity to "live" history), the Fort is inviting alumni and the community at large to celebrate the longevity of the fun and interactive program during a special evening event "Twilight: Return to the Fort" on Saturday, June 4, 2011.

After the Fort's daytime activities have ended on Saturday, June 4, the Fort will re-open at 6 p.m. and come alive for an evening celebration complete with a grand cannon fire welcome, a scrumptious pioneer dinner, Gold Rush-era live entertainment by the Amazing Harmonatras, dancing, hands-on craft activities, storytelling by docents who will recite adventures of California's early pioneers and much more! Tickets cost \$35 for adults and \$20 for children (under 17 years of age), and are available now at www.suttersfort.org. A fundraising event for the non-profit Friends of Sutter's Fort, "Twilight: Return to the Fort" tickets include dinner, live entertainment and take-home keepsake items hand-crafted at the event.

Over the years, it is estimated that more than 1,800 school tour groups -- or 90,000 school children -- have visited the Fort and experienced the pioneer life as part of the amazingly popular Environmental Living Program. The program is open to all fourth graders including those in public or private schools as well as home school environments, and schools are selected via a random drawing after an application process. Classes prepare for a visit to Sutter's Fort SHP several months in advance, incorporating their adventure into the standard California fourth grade curriculum. Then the students, along with their teacher and trained parent helpers, spend 24 hours portraying characters of 1840's California and partake in the various trade activities and entertainment of the era. The learning experience includes cooking like pioneers, participating in pioneer crafts, doing the jobs of pioneers such as blacksmith, spinning, weaving, candle dipping, packing a covered wagon, cooking in the period kitchen, banjo music and square dancing, and sleeping under the stars.

For more information about "Twilight: Return to the Fort," the Environmental Living Program or other activities happening at Sutter's Fort SHP, please call (916) 445-4422 or visit www.suttersfort.org.

About Sutter's Fort State Historic Park

Operated by California State Parks with financial assistance from the nonprofit Friends of Sutter's Fort, Sutter's Fort State Historic Park is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Located in midtown Sacramento on L Street between 26th and 28th Streets, the Fort offers special events, Living History and Demonstration Days programs throughout the year. Established in 1839 by Swiss immigrant John Augustus Sutter, Sutter's Fort was at the center of a flourishing agricultural empire

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named New Helvetia (New Switzerland.) This empire established Sacramento's earliest settlement and the first European settlement in California's Central Valley. For more information, call (916) 445-4422 or visit www.suttersfort.org

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